

VIDEO 101

HOW TO
SHOOT
VIDEO
LIKE A
PRO



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How to Shoot Video Like A Pro

Video is an incredibly useful tool—both to better communicate your value, and create a personal touch which demonstrates unique qualities about your brand. According to comScore, a digital analytics company, online video increases consumer preferences for a product by nearly 25 percent. To effectively improve your chances of having that video be an asset and not a liability, it's essential to shoot something of high quality.

Today, video is everywhere on the web. Professionals can create great advantages if they take the time to master video production and then continue to be active in it. The best news is that the price point of entry and technical skill-set requirements for shooting your own professional-quality video aren't very high. With just a few key techniques, you can shoot a solid introduction or explanatory video, in very little time.

This Wise Guide will explain what equipment you need, how to set it all up, look good for the camera and deliver the best version of your value proposition.

1 Equipment

With the ease of creating video on laptops or phones, it's fairly easy to cut corners in this area and get a video of reasonable quality. However, if a picture is worth a thousand words, what's the net value of a compelling video that's shot well, sounds great and looks top notch?

The following is a list of items needed and some basic principles to adhere to when investing in video equipment.

Camera

Look for HD quality (1080p), and ideally it should have a port for external microphone inputs.

budget mode

Point-and-shoot cameras are abundant and many are under \$300, however, don't scrimp on the HD quality video for other features.

Sound

Get a Lavalier microphone with either a wired or wireless connection. Sennheiser is the industry leader and they have several models.

budget mode

Get in a room with carpeted floors, low ceilings and no outside noise (even air conditioning) and keep the camera close enough to reduce distortion.

Lighting

Three (3) 1000 Watt floodlights with "Soft boxes" (one for a main light, one for a fill, one for an edge or hair light). Smith Victor, www.smithvictor.com, has great lighting kits.

budget mode

Rent lights, rent a studio or get three strong lamps with shades that you can adjust.

Teleprompter

Apps for your iPad or computer work well, as does a full-blown teleprompter. Prompter People has several models that are all high quality.

budget mode

Download a teleprompter app for your iPad – Teleprompter + For iPad is the best. Even Post-it notes work well for memory prompts – attach them to the camera and keep your eyes aimed at the lens.

Editing Software

Apple's iMovie is the easiest solution for most needs and it's often used by professionals as well, because of its robust feature set.

budget mode

Some cameras allow for editing in the camera and many freeware solutions are out there for basic editing needs. You can even farm the work out to a technician through many of the freelance-for-hire websites, such as www.Fiverr.com. Our recommendation, if you plan to do video regularly, is to get iMovie from Apple.



2 Set-Up

If breaking up is hard to do, then setting up is a snap. With few variables, you should be able to set up a space to permanently shoot video or quickly set up and break down this equipment without taking more than just a few minutes.

Lighting

The most important thing to remember about lighting is the set-up of a lighting triangle. There are three lights:

1 Key Light

This is the main light used on your subject.

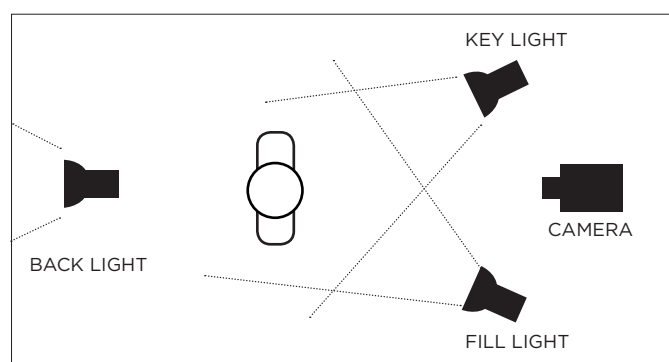
2 Fill Light

The purpose of this light is to fill in the shadows created by the key light, preventing them from getting too dark.

3 Back Light

This light is used to separate the subject from the background.

Setting up the lighting is fairly easy. Place your camera opposite the subject. Place the key light to the left or right of the camera. On the opposite side of the key light, place the fill light, to round out the hard edges of the key light and create a triangle. Place the back light behind the subject, either on the ground, or high above and out of the frame, shooting down the back of their head. A back light will provide a visual “pop” to the subject and make them stand out from the backdrop.



Camera

The simple format for setting up the camera is to make the lens eye level with the subject. Use your tripod to adjust and keep a level view. Keep the camera closer to the subject and you'll see more, hear more and feel more connection.

Backdrop

A basic scrim or paper backdrop can make for a plain and not-too-distracting background. But if time or your situation doesn't allow for that, select a simple wall that is free of too many details or visual noise. Make certain you never film against a window or in front of a busy backdrop; your subject should always be the most arresting part of the frame.

If the video is being shot without a backdrop in an office or room, be critical about what is visible the background. Messy desks, open doors and a generally distracting environment can be distracting. Consider filming in front of a book case, within view of a plant or another space that is pleasing to the eye.

Sound

If shooting with a camera microphone or shotgun microphone that attaches to the camera, the camera should be close to the subject to protect sound distortion. A wireless lavalier microphone will have more flexibility for camera positioning.

Place the microphone on a lapel or shirt six inches below the chin, and out of the way of any clothes that might rustle when your subject moves or gestures.

Prior to filming, make sure the surrounding environment is as silent as possible. Notify colleagues and neighbors, if necessary and request they keep noise levels down. Additionally, silence phones and other devices that may ring or sound alarms and cause interruptions.

3 Attire and Make-up

Shooting good video is certainly about equipment, but it's mostly about content. Compelling content makes or breaks a solid video no matter how nicely framed the image, or no matter how well lit the subject.

The best way to ensure good content, with a subject familiar with the topic, is for them to feel confident. Make certain the subject is well-dressed, has any shine removed from their face and isn't wearing patterns that are distracting to your audience. See below for additional tips on clothing and make-up.

Do Wear

- Medium earth-tone colors like blue, brown and light green or pastels.
- Simple, classic styles.
- Solid color clothing with no patterns.
- Clothes that are comfortable to move in.

Do NOT Wear

- Deeply saturated colors like orange, yellow or red that can appear to "glow" on screen.
- Bright white or dark colors that can cause your complexion to look washed out.
- Flashy or noisy jewelry that will reflect light or distract attention.

Additional Tips

- Use a handkerchief or tissues to dab perspiration.
- If you are wearing eyeglasses, avoid shiny frames. You may tip the bows of your glasses up slightly off the ears to reduce glare.

Tips for Men

- Always keep double-breasted jackets buttoned.
- Single-breasted jackets can be opened, but not too wide.

Trick: If the subject is wearing a tie, slip the thin part of the tie through the loop in the back of the main part of the tie, then clip the thin part to the shirt below the loop. This will keep a tie perfectly centered, without the tie clip showing.

Tips for Women

- Consider dress shields if the subject perspires easily.
- Make sure hair will stay in place. To avoid messing with it during filming, style with product and spray to hold in place. Keep your hairspray on the set for touch-ups.

4 Technique

Looking good on film with lighting, clothing and strong content is necessary for a solid impression, but technique can make or break that created impression. Studies show that we process most of our information through body language. So, even if delivering the most impressive message in the world, if it's not communicated effectively, you'll lose a significant advantage.

Energy

With film, a little energy gets lost in translation. If, in person, energy can be gauged as a seven, on a scale of one to ten, it will appear much closer to a five on film. Increasing energy compensates for this.

Voice

Most of what can be taught simply about improving voice for presentations is to enhance the inflection used. Free up the diaphragm by sitting up tall, opening the throat, then clearly enunciating.

Hands

Nothing is more distracting than phony hand gestures. If a subject is plugged into the delivery of their message, their hands will do everything needed, without thinking about it. Commit to every minute of what is being said and let hands move naturally.

However, keep hands in sight, as most people better trust speakers whose hands they can see.

Eyes

The eyes, as the saying goes, are windows to the soul. When enthusiasm comes through the eyes, there's a huge difference in the quality of the video. Engage, excite and motivate, using eyes to express emotions.





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